

Notes and Implications: “War Speech”

Analytical Sample

- Speech
- Lower performance level

Notes: This piece shows the student writer attempting to engage an audience through a transactive genre for the purpose of analyzing the “atrocities of war.” This piece is a good example of a student addressing an audience superficially. Thus, he/she never completely engages the reader.

Instructional Implications: Though this performance level is not the “goal” of analytical writing, it is often helpful to look at weaker samples to have students consider what they should continue working on in their own writing.

Teachers might consider using this piece to show student’s lack of engagement of a real audience. To whom is the writer actually speaking? How could audience awareness be stronger? Why/how is the writer an expert on the subject of war?

Likewise, this is a good example of a student trying to analyze a topic without sufficient support. The writer works through what might happen during a nuclear war, but offers little in the way of credible evidence. Teachers could use this piece to discuss the need for and integration of research to support the analysis.

War Speech

Hello, ladies and gentlemen. Before I get started let me thank you for your time and attention while I share my point of view, reasoning, and opinions. To be given the opportunity to speak for such a prestigious audience is an honor.

As you all know, I am here to speak of the atrocity of war. War is not the same as it was one-hundred years ago. We are much more advanced in the field of technology. Rifles and hand grenades have now been replaced by nuclear weapons and megaton bombs. When a gun is fired there is a chance a person could be killed, when a nuclear bomb is dropped it is definite millions of lives will be destroyed.

If a war breaks out today, it will be a nuclear war, and I don't believe we realize the major destruction that would occur. A nuclear war could lead to the annihilation of the human race, our existence would be demolished.

If a nuclear bomb was dropped everything near the hit would be vaporized, ripped apart, and melted. Thirty miles away tiny missiles would shoot from shattered glass, the flash of the explosion would be blinding, and the heat would give third degree burns. The effect of the bomb at that time would be unbearable, but as time goes on the situation would get increasingly worse. The radiation would deteriorate the ozone layer causing harmful UV rays. The topsoil would become radioactive making crops impossible. Once the topsoil becomes radioactive so will the grass that cows and other animals graze on, depleting our countries livestock. Our main food groups, vegetables, meat, and dairy, which we rely on for a healthy diet, now are extinct.

Before you drop a nuclear bomb on your rival nation think of how it will affect you, your family, your friends, your country. In some way your country relies on its neighbors for products. What affects one country affects all of us, because we are all global neighbors, sharing one world environment. We are all part of one world economy, if one country is short in supply, the entire world is in demand. But the biggest worry is the ozone layer. Would your country want to be affiliated with the destruction of the ozone and responsible for skin cancer due to the UV rays?

The question you need to ask yourself is, "Do you really want to hurt your enemy bad enough to hurt the entire world including yourself?" As General Omar Bradley once said, "It is no longer possible to shield ourselves with arms alone against the ordeal of attack. For modern war visits destruction on the victor and vanquished alike.... The way to win an atomic war is to make certain it never starts." Surely, as civilized, intelligent beings we are capable of settling our differences in a less primitive way than by war and its unnecessary destruction.

War Speech

authentic transactive
genre for analysis

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see note under Instructional Implications

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tries to
establish a
focus

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comparison
of war in
previous
paragraph
allows student
to begin to
analyze what
nuclear war
would be
like

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draws some
conclusions

*see note under "Instructional Implications" for comments on support

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shows
some
audience
awareness

) includes
some
support

draws
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